NOVA SCOTIA
NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

Natural Resources
Ressources naturelles

Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

French-language Services Plan 2008-2009

Report DNR 2008-2
April 2008

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Table of Contents

1. Message from the Deputy Minister 1

2. Current Communications 1

3. Current French-language Services 1

4. Contribution to the Preservation or Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community 2

5. Progress in 2007-2008 and Goals, Objectives and Measures for 2008-2009 2

Corporate Objective 1. Strengthening the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the *French-language Services Act*. 2

Corporate Objective 2. Consulting with the Acadian and francophone community. 3

Corporate Objective 3. Communicating, sharing information, and promoting services available in French. 4

Corporate Objective 4. Supporting French-language services development, planning and delivery in priority areas. 4

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1. Message from the Deputy Minister

It is my pleasure to present the French-language Services Plan for the Department of Natural Resources for the 2008-09 fiscal year. The upcoming year will be an exciting one for the department as a three-phase plan to develop a long-term strategy for minerals, forests, provincial parks and biodiversity will be just underway. The first phase will be public consultations that will be led by Voluntary Planning. I invite and encourage members of the Acadian and francophone community to become involved by participating in this process and by making your views known on how the province should manage its natural resources in the future.

My department will continue to work with the Office of Acadian Affairs and with Nova Scotia's other designated public institutions to advance the social, economic and cultural well-being of the province's Acadian and francophone population. As a department, we are committed to meeting the requirements of the *French-language Services Act* and with fulfilling our commitments for 2008-09 that we are making in this plan.

2. Current Communications

The department's practice is to reply in French to any written correspondence received in French. This covers basic inquiries and simple requests for information. The Office of Acadian Affairs provides translation services which the department is able to periodically utilize. This helps the department to better communicate with its Acadian and francophone clients.

3. Current French-language Services

The department provides certain information in French on its website. The focus has been on information that appeals to a relatively large number of the general public. This includes a range of outreach materials aimed at woodlot owners and at teachers and students. Information describing the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park and the animals at the park is also provided in French. French-language services are available for Nova Scotians and other clients who wish to make reservations for campsites in Nova Scotia's provincial camping park system by using the toll-free telephone reservation line. The Park Rules and Regulations brochure and other printed materials are also available in French for the use of provincial camping park visitors.

4. Contribution to the Preservation or Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community

The department has broad responsibilities relative to the development, management, conservation, use, and protection of forest, mineral, park and wildlife resources and the administration of Crown lands.

The department's activities include the operation of our provincial parks system and our wildlife park, providing forest protection-related services, such as fighting forest fires and dealing with infestations of insects and diseases that attack the province's forests, enforcing the natural resources related legislation that is the responsibility of the department, and delivering a wide range of other geoscience, wildlife, forest, and Crown lands related programs and services. Many Nova Scotians, including those in the Acadian and francophone community, are already familiar with these programs and services, and either use them directly or benefit from them indirectly.

5. Progress in 2007-2008 and Goals, Objectives and Measures for 2008-2009

Corporate Objective 1. Strengthening the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the *French-language Services Act*.

Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008:

- The department was represented on the interdepartmental French-language Services Coordinating Committee and participated on the consultations sub-committee.

- Implementation of the 2007-08 French-language services plan and development of the 2008-09 French-language services plan were included as priorities in the department's 2007-08 Business Plan.

Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009:

- The department will support the Office of Acadian Affairs and the ongoing implementation of the *French-language Services Act* and its regulations by continued participation on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee.

- Implementation of the 2008-09 French-language services plan and development of the 2009-10 French-language services plan are identified as priorities in the department's 2008-09 Business Plan.

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009:

- Participate on the interdepartmental French-language Services Coordinating Committee.
- Participate on relevant sub-committees of the French-language Services Coordinating Committee.
- Work to implement specific measures identified in the department's 2008-09 French-language Services Plan.

Corporate Objective 2. Consulting with the Acadian and francophone community.

Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008:

- On May 1, 2007 the department announced the start of a three-year, three-phase process to develop a new natural resources strategy covering the province's natural resources. The final strategy is expected to be completed in the spring of 2010 and will include four key components: forest, minerals, parks and biodiversity.
- Voluntary Planning will be leading the initial phase of the natural resources strategy development process. Advertisements for members to serve on the Natural Resources Strategy Project Committee were placed in Le Courrier and news releases announcing that committee members were needed and the identities of committee members were provided in French.

Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009:

- Voluntary Planning will be conducting public consultations to gather the views of Nova Scotians on how these resources should be managed. Opportunities will be provided for members of the Acadian and francophone community to provide their views on the future management of Nova Scotia's natural resources.

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009:

- To ensure that the Acadian and francophone community is able to participate and make their views known, Voluntary Planning will provide workshops in two Acadian communities in French. Voluntary Planning will also provide project advertisements and documentation in French to facilitate participation by members of the Acadian and francophone community.

Corporate Objective 3. Communicating, sharing information, and promoting services available in French.

Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008:

- provided presentation on French-language services requirements to the top level of management staff in the branch responsible for most of the department's field offices.

Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009:

- Increase the availability of departmental information available in French.

- Implement a standard process for department staff to use when responding to written correspondence and verbal communications received in French. The intent of this process will be to provide consistency in how department staff deal with French speaking clients.

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009:

- Develop a departmental policy on responding to written correspondence and verbal communication received in French.

- Prepare an updated list of department staff capable of interacting with French speaking clients.

Corporate Objective 4. Supporting French-language services development, planning and delivery in priority areas.

Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008:

- A number of department staff participated in training opportunities offered through the Office of Acadian Affairs.

- Members of the public who call the toll-free telephone line to make camping park reservations are able to receive service in French. Some advertising and promotion materials are also now available in French.

- Various types of outreach material on natural resources stewardship are available on the departmental website.

Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009

- Increase the availability of information available in French on the department website and facilities.

- Increase the ability of department staff and department workplaces to provide services in French.

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009

- Promote participation in French-language training opportunities.

- Evaluate the demand for French-language services in specific DNR offices / facilities and identify opportunities for the improved provision of French-language services.